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In his introductory chapter he deals in generalities—the basis of customs unions. The American union, the German *Zollverein*, and other politico-economic consolidations are considered to show the conditions which make customs unions possible. The conclusion arrived at is that the policy of fiscal union, so far as the British Empire is concerned, stands condemned because nature—unlike in the case of the United States, Germany, and other countries—has furnished the British Empire with broad bands of separation between its greatest zones, and has thus helped to solve for the British Empire one of the most difficult problems confronting mankind.

The author, however, is not content with general statements, but proceeds, in succeeding chapters (2-9) to consider in great detail the commerce and commercial policy of the various self-governing and crown colonies of Great Britain. This part of the book—not only the bulkiest, but also the most valuable, portion—is written in a clear and fairly unbiased manner, gives us a valuable picture of present trade and industrial conditions of the countries in question, and is a contribution of considerable present value to the discussion of the plan of British imperial federation. The author makes out a strong case, in the body of his book, for the general conclusions stated in his introductory chapter. In his final chapter he tells us that, as far as foreign countries are concerned, Great Britain can exercise no controlling influence in the legislation that regulates such matters, and at best can only ask for conditions as favorable as its competitors. But the lesson apparently has not yet been fully learned, that the trade policy which best assures the prosperity of each component part of the British Empire will prove in the long run best for it as a whole.

GEORGE MYGATT FISK.

Deutsche Arbeitskammern: Untersuchungen zur Frage einer gesetzlichen Interessenvertretung der Unternehmer und Arbeiter in Deutschland. By BERNARD HARMS. Tübingen: H. Laupp, 1904. 8vo, pp xii + 96.

This book is of the nature of a tract for the times. Recent economic development in Germany has brought that country face to face with the same crisis in dealing with conflicting industrial interests felt to exist in the United States. Dr. Harms believes that not only the economic future of Germany, but the future of the nation itself, is threatened unless some means is speedily found of allaying

the bitterness of the struggle between employer and employed, a struggle always imminent and frequently shown in strikes. The author does not pretend to have discovered a solution of existing labor problems that will in a day bring social peace; but he has great confidence that he has indicated the next step necessary for progress in that direction.

That step lies in the creation by law, for dealing with industrial questions, of still another organ of government—the *Arbeitskammern*. He admits that the success of similar boards in various continental countries, whose work is reviewed in the first third of the volume, has been indifferent; but he finds the reasons for relative failure chiefly in the faulty organization of these boards and in their lack of financial support. Dr. Harms' scheme provides for the formation, wherever the conditions of industry demand them, of local labor boards (*Lokalarbeitskammern*) that shall be truly representative of the industrial interests of employers and employed engaged in factory production. The relations now established between masters and men in the handicrafts, and the work of their organized means of conference—the *Handwerkskammern*—he would leave undisturbed. He would have the local chamber inquire into many subjects pertaining to the communal welfare—as lodgings, workingmen's dwellings, poor-relief, support of those out of work, and government employment agencies—apparently with a view to giving advice to, and co-operating with, the local authorities. He would have them investigate the industries represented with reference to the numbers employed, wages, the employment of women and children, and the like. These chambers would become a meeting-ground for conflicting interests and a means of promoting a mutual understanding and sympathy between the industrial classes. And finally he would transfer to these *Arbeitskammern* one of the functions of the arbitration boards (*Gewerbgerichte*) authorized by the act of July 29, 1890—namely, that of mediation.

It is shown that the *Gewerbgerichte* are not fulfilling the purpose for which they were intended. In 1896 they were used in only twenty-eight cases in the whole empire, and in 1900 the number had risen to only fifty. Dr. Harms argues with great force that an error was made in giving to these tribunals the powers of a court over questions coming before them, while requiring them also to act as a board of conciliation (pp. 76, 77). This duty he would transfer from the arbitration tribunals to the *Arbeitskammern*, which are

primarily concerned with the details of the industrial life of the community; and he would require that, before a strike or lockout occurs in which more than ten persons are involved, the questions in dispute must be brought before certain officers of the *Localarbeitskammern* sitting as an *Einigungskommission*. The negotiation would be compulsory; but upon a failure of the parties to agree, the strike may be proceeded with. This plan would at least compel a degree of "publicity" not now possible in Germany or in our own country; but it has been contended that such a law would be a prolific breeder of strikes. The natural tendency of conciliation boards is to suggest a compromise—to split the difference. Workmen likely to get the approval of a board, and the supposed consequent public sympathy, for a demand for something more than they are getting, have constantly before them, it is said, a temptation to threaten a strike.

These local boards have the most important functions to perform that belong to Dr. Harms' scheme. But above them he would have district boards (*Bezirksarbeitskammern*), composed of representatives chosen by the local boards, whose duty it would be to work over the statistical material collected by the local boards, keep in touch with their needs and demands, and serve as a medium of communication with the imperial labor office (*Reichsarbeitsamt*), which he would place at the head of the whole organization.

How far the scheme proposed would go toward bridging over the "social and economic chasm" which now separates the producing classes, it is difficult to say; but in a country where legal compulsion may be used to bring antagonists, too often well-nigh strangers, into active co-operation in dealing with varied problems of community welfare, it does not seem improbable that a better understanding might be reached in matters of employment. It is at least possible that employers should after a time ask themselves the questions put by the author: Why not take into partial confidence at least the men who ought to know something reliable about current industrial conditions? Why leave all instruction on such matters to the political agitators?

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WINONA, MINN.

Trade Unionism and British Industry. By EDWIN A. PRATT.
London: John Murray, 1904. 8vo, pp. vii + 244.

The republication at this time of the articles which Mr. Pratt contributed to the *London Times* in the fall of 1901 under the title